

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. An apparatus, comprising:
2 a pellicle fused to a frame; and
3 a reticle attached to the frame.
- 1 2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
2 the reticle is fused to the frame.
- 1 3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
2 the reticle comprises fused silica.
- 1 4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein:
2 the frame comprises fused silica.
- 1 5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
2 the reticle is to be used in a lithographic exposure operation in manufacturing
3 integrated circuits.
- 1 6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
2 the pellicle comprises fused silica.
- 1 7. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein:
2 the frame comprises fused silica.

1 8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
2 the pellicle is fused to the frame along a seam between the pellicle and the
3 frame.

1 9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:
2 the pellicle has a local tilt of less than 10 microradians.

1 10. A method, comprising:
2 fusing a pellicle to a frame at a first seam between the pellicle and the frame;
3 and
4 attaching the frame to a reticle.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein:
2 said attaching the frame comprises fusing the frame to the reticle.

1 12. The method of claim 11, wherein:
2 said fusing the pellicle to the frame occurs approximately concurrently with said
3 fusing the frame to the reticle.

1 13. The method of claim 10, wherein:
2 said fusing the pellicle to the frame occurs before said attaching the frame to the
3 reticle.

1 14. The method of claim 10, wherein:

2 said fusing the pellicle to the frame occurs after said attaching the frame to the
3 reticle.

1 15. The method of claim 10, wherein:
2 said fusing the pellicle to the frame comprises using a laser beam.

1 16. The method of claim 15, wherein:
2 said using the laser beam comprises using an infrared laser beam.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein:
2 said infrared laser beam is produced by a CO₂ laser.

1 18. A system, comprising:
2 a support to hold a pellicle and a frame in place for a fusion attachment between
3 the pellicle and the frame;
4 a laser device to fuse the pellicle to the frame;
5 a structure to position a first seam between the pellicle and the frame in a path
6 of a laser beam from the laser device; and
7 a control device to move at least one of the pellicle and the laser relative to one
8 another to move at least a part of the first seam through the path of the
9 laser beam.

1 19. The system of claim 18, wherein:
2 the support is further to hold the frame and a reticle in place for attachment to
3 one another.

1 20. The system of claim 18, wherein:
2 the control device is to move at least one of the pellicle and the laser relative to
3 one another to move all of the first seam through the path of the laser
4 beam.

1 21. The system of claim 18, wherein:
2 the laser device comprises a CO₂ laser.

1 22. The system of claim 18, wherein:
2 the support is further to hold a reticle and the frame in place for a fusion
3 attachment to one another;
4 the laser device is further to fuse the frame to the reticle;
5 the structure is further to position a second seam between the frame and the
6 reticle in the path of the laser beam from the laser device; and
7 the control device is further to move at least one of the reticle and the laser
8 device relative to one another to move at least a part of the second seam
9 through the path of the laser beam.